



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

2001 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2001

Tel 919-733-4534 • Fax 919-715-4645

Michael F. Easley, Governor

Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

June 29, 2005

To all Division Directors:

I am excited to announce that the department's web site is entering a new phase.

All of you have lent staff to workgroups looking at how the DHHS web site could become more integrated and useful to our customers. This week I have approved the good work coming out of the committees on process and on navigation and have given the go-ahead to this integration effort. Public Affairs will spearhead this effort with crucial technical backing from DIRM and with the support of all the divisions and offices.

The result will be a strategic plan for web development and e-commerce in DHHS, consistent with our vision and mission. All the different audiences who need information from us should experience a professional and helpful web presence to enhance our customer service. Reliability of information and ease of use must be our primary concerns.

Some of the goals of the redesign are:

- Search capabilities across the site
- Spanish-language content for all information geared toward NC residents
- Uniform tools across the website to help navigation
- Organization around logical topics, not our divisions and offices, so that no one has to learn how we are organized to find information.

When this redesign is fully implemented, our present maze of 100-plus web sites will be gone. Rather than a dozen division web sites and dozens of program-specific web sites, we'll have one integrated departmental web site. (There will be exceptions, of course, for web sites that have very specialized e-government functions, or for sites with a high-profile, branded, public service component.) I envision an easily navigated, well-written, highly searchable, and *useful* site. I want us to be a national leader in this area.

My next steps will be as follows. In the next week I'll be appointing a Web Task Force, with representatives from our management team, public affairs, the budget office, and DIRM. The public affairs representative will be a new a public information officer for the web, to oversee the effort, ensuring its integrity and continuity. The Web Task Force will get the ball rolling by creating a time line for this project, identifying priorities, identifying needed resources, and appointing several teams. Currently, it appears we'll need a team for design and a team to solve search engine issues. Content-specific teams will also be needed.

This project will obviously be long-term and require your attention and resources. Here is what I need from you in the short term:

1. Your full support is crucial to this effort and to this vision. Some of you have put a lot of energy and resources behind your current web sites. I am convinced that the information that we currently offer is



some of the best in state government. However, the end result of our disjointed efforts is chaotic. We simply have to work together. It won't be easy, but with your support, it will be possible.

2. Please send an email describing any current web site development in your division to Lois Nilsen in Public Affairs, lois.nilsen@ncmail.net. State if it's a new web site or a redesign of a current site, and where you are in the process. Lois will meet with you to help ensure your efforts will not be wasted and can be incorporated into the new DHHS redesign.
3. The redesign is based on four portals: NC Residents, State and Local Government, Providers and Partners, and Researchers. The first focus will be on the portal for NC Residents. I am attaching the six resident portal topics. Please assign people from your division for each topic for which your division or office has an important role. These appointees should be people who are high up in your management structure, who are experts in your programs and who will make decisions you can live with regarding how your programs are described and represented. Please be aware that this project will require some time and dedication on their part. Down the road, more people in your division or office may need to become involved. The Web Task Force will meet with each Topic Team to help them determine how to proceed. By July 22, email your choices for each topic area to lois.nilsen@ncmail.net.
4. The design and search engine teams will be staffed primarily from DIRM and Public Affairs. However, if you want to assign someone in your division to serve on either team, please email lois.nilsen@ncmail.net.

Thank you for your support and energy that you devote to this project. I hope you are as excited as I am about the prospect for a redesigned DHHS web presence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carmen Hooker Odom".

Carmen Hooker Odom

Six Content Teams for Resident Portal Topics

The information on the new site designed for NC residents will constitute one ‘portal.’ (The other portals are for researchers, government, and providers.) The Resident Portal has six main topics, and each needs a content team. Since some staff may be assigned to more than one Content Team, the weeks of the month for meetings are specified.

- **Children:** Subtopics and program links include: child care; child support; child protection; adoption; Health Choice, foster care, education. **Need 2 staff from DSS, 1 from DCD, 1 from DSB, 1 from OES, 1 from DSDHH, 1 from DMA, 1 from DMH, 1 from OES, and 1 from DPH, 1 from Public Affairs, and 1 from OCS. Meet on the first week of the month.**
- **Families & Adults:** Subtopics and program links include: child support, domestic violence, refugees, food stamps, medication assistance, Work First, adult protective services. **Need 2 staff from DAAS, 2 from DSS, 1 from DMH, 1 from DVR, 1 from DPH, 1 from OEO, 1 from Public Affairs, and 1 from OCS. Meet on the 4th week of the month.**
- **Health, Physical and Mental:** Subtopics include: diseases and illnesses, safety and wellness, environmental health, mental health, substance abuse, mental health reform, migrant health, rural health. **Need 4 staff from DPH, 1 from OMHHD, 1 from ORDRHD, 1 from OVR, 3 from DMH, 1 from DMA, 1 from Public Affairs, 1 from OCS. Meet on the 2nd week of the month.**
- **Medicaid:** Subtopics include: eligibility, covered services, appeals, report fraud or abuse]. **Need 4-5 staff from DMA, 1 from DPH, 1 from DSS, 1 from Public Affairs, and 1 from OCS. Meet on the 3rd week of the month.**
- **Older Adults:** Subtopics and program links include: long-term care, adult day care, Senior Care, medication assistance, adult protective services, family caregivers. **Need 3 staff from DAAS, 1 from DFS, 1 from DMA, 1 from Public Affairs, and 1 from OCS. Meet on the first week of the month.**
- **People w/ Disabilities:** Subtopics and program links include: deaf, blind, developmental disabilities, disability determination, living in the community. **Need 1 staff from DSB, 1 from DSDHH, 1 from DVR, 1 from DSS, 1 from OES, 1 from Public Affairs, and 1 from OCS. Meet on the 3rd week of the month.**

(The other three portals are State and Local Government, Providers and Partners, and Researchers. Staffing of content teams for these portals will come later.)